

THE FARMER

AGRICULTURE / MECHANIC ARTS / LITERATURE, NEWS &c.

BADGER & MANLEY, Publishers.

"OUR HOME, OUR COUNTRY AND OUR BROTHER MAN."

Vol. XLVI.

Augusta, Maine, Saturday Morning, June 15, 1878.

No. 29.

Maine Farmer.

E. L. BOARDMAN, Agricultural Editor.

Tillage.

Old John Whorl, who wrote his "System Agriculture," or the Mystery of Husbandry Discovered and laid Open," so early as 1681, calls the plough "the most happy instrument that ever was discovered;" and then he goes on to enumerate the advantages that come from its use in tillage—to read which one would not think, aside from the quaint wording, that his language was nearly two hundred years old, so completely does it conform to the practices and principles of the present day. He says, 1st: "the plough layeth the ground by degrees in ridges, in such order as the nature thereof requireth; 2d: This often stirring the land makes it light, and fitter for the seed to take root therein, the clods being apt to dissolve by being exposed to the weather; 3d: It kills the weeds which in strong lands are apt to overrun the corn and waste the nutritious fertility of the earth, and 4th: It fertilizeth the land—the sun and the sun—(an ancient term for plow) are some husbandmen's soil." And so down through all the writers who have given attention to this subject during the past two hundred years, the tillage of the soil, both before and after the seed has been planted, has been deemed a matter of prime importance in every system of husbandry. The plowing and cultivation of the soil before the seed is put in, is not necessary, so far as many crops are concerned, than is the after cultivation. At this period the preparatory cultivation has been given nearly all the land that is to be in crops this season in Maine (the exceptions being late fodder and root crops) so that now farmers must for a few weeks to come, turn their attention to the surface tillage of the ground as an aid to the growth and production of crops.

Just here the plow, or the various modifications of the plow, in the form of cultivators, horse and hand hoes, etc., come into use, the advantages of which were so quaintly spoken by our old author who "laid open" the "mysteries" of husbandry two hundred years ago. His last two advantages claimed are worth thinking about in connection with the cultivation of our crops or the after tillage of land: the use of the plow (or cultivator and hoe) kills the weeds; while the very act of tillage is in itself a means of fertility. Mr. J. B. Lawes, the distinguished English experimenter, says that generally in American agriculture, the destruction of weeds and more careful cultivation would be quite as efficacious in increasing the products of our farms as the employment of artificial manure! Think of this! Think of the vast sum spent for special fertilizers applied to corn and other field crops to give a quick growth and larger yield, which might have saved were the land kept free from weeds; or in other words, the manure applied goes largely to support the plants (weeds) which take a great deal of nourishment from the soil and plant food applied, which under cultivation would go to the increase of the crop. On how many of our farms, do we, in fact, grow, for a living, contend against pests in the shape of useless weeds, and dividing the nourishment obtained from the soil or from manure applied, with those plants which yield no profit, and furnish no aid to the farmers' family. Here comes in the necessity for cultivation, for the tillage of land, planted to crops for the express purpose of destroying the weeds. Were this not done our fields would be over-run and our useful crops completely choked out. While tillage or cultivation is a positive pre-requisite to planting the crop, it is no less so to its subsequent care. The horse hoe, the cultivator and the hand hoe will be in active use during the coming few weeks, for there is every indication that hay will come on early this season, and what surface tillage our fields of corn and potatoes get they must receive before July opens. The crop of weeds must be defeated before, then, or our harvest will be, to that extent, lessened in consequence.

Farmers' Experiments.

The business of farming, of all human occupations, is the most intricate and deals with the most profound and subtle elements and agencies. There are but few things that it is set to a finality, and even in the growing of the most common farm crop, or the performing of some of the simplest farm operations, there is yet abundant room for the closest investigations, and improvements in methods or practices may be compassed by even common farmers who set about them with intelligence and follow them up with care and persistency. Dr. Lawes has said in some of his recent writings, that on account of the influence of different seasons and other agencies affecting plant growth, conclusions derived from the results of a single year's trial are of little value; and experiments long ago concluded that it was only by having the same experiments tried repeatedly over and over again, under similar well-advised conditions, that the true and most satisfactory results could be obtained. Indeed, Dr. Lawes himself says: "An average of ten years is by no means too long a period to adopt as a final point at which to carry an experiment, while in the field experiments on my farm, we consider that twenty years is not too long a period in writing upon any experiments field produce." What an example is here for our experiment trying friends who are apt to form conclusions based on the result of a single, or at least two or three years' effort! Persistent patience, accuracy and great attention to details, should characterize the carrying on of every agricultural experiment.

Treatment of Blood Diseases in Swine.

A report is given in some of the foreign journals of the subcutaneous injection of diluted carbolic acid—about one part of acid to one hundred of water—as remedy for blood poisoning in pigs which resulted with great satisfaction. The disease with which the pigs were affected was evidently a sort of erysipelas, red spots appearing upon the surface of the skin, and the animal dying from it in a short time. The carbolic acid was applied by means of a single injecting syringe, the operation being very easily performed. A fold of the skin was taken up between the thumb and finger of the left hand, the nozzle of the syringe inserted, and the fluid contents deposited under the skin by means of a gentle pressure. The operation can do no harm, and might prove beneficial where pigs are similarly affected in this country.

Editorial Notes.

In the article in our last issue by Prof. G. H. Stone, on "The Distribution of the Tit," in the fourth line from the end, readers will please put *vegetable* in place of "neglected," so the sentence will read "animal or vegetable life, etc."

Prospects of Sheep.

It is favorable for all our growing crops that with the dry weather of the past few weeks it has also been cool; the cool days and nights preventing the crops from suffering as they would have done had it been very warm. True, it has been warm during the middle of the day on many days—but generally the weather of the past two weeks has been cool. This has had the effect to check the "thawing up" of grass, and caused it to grow slowly and thicken up at the bottom; and yet, the indications at present are that hay will commence early. In many sections of the State, especially through the central and western portions, rain is greatly needed; and spring grain, corn, and grass on old fields, will be at a stand-still unless it comes soon. Aside from this want of rain, which let us hope may yet come in due season—the prospects of the country were never more encouraging; abundant feed in pastures, large

breaks of crops sown and planted, grass looking finely in fields, and apple trees promising a heavy yield. Truly we have cause for gratitude and encouragement.

Experiments in Turnip Growing.

The last issue of the *Country Gentleman's Magazine*, (London, Eng.), details the results of some experiments in the growing of turnips to determine the distance apart of roots that gave the largest yield per acre, which may not be without value to our readers now that more attention is being given to root culture in our State. In the first experiment Swedes were planted at distances of twelve, nine and six inches apart respectively; with everything in favor of six inches as being the best distance—or in other words the land that at six inch intervals would produce 100 pounds of turnips, would at nine inch intervals yield but 82 pounds, and at twelve inches intervals only 74 pounds.

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A large amount of manure from the city, the distance by rail being only some city,

planted, and some ten or twelve sowed, four acres in wheat.

Mr. T. F. Bridgton of Bridgton last year raised 255 bushels of ears of corn from two and one-half acres, a small eight-rowed variety. Yard manure spread on with superphosphate and plaster in the winter account of the wet fall. I very fortunately found Mr. H. on the farm the day of my visit—indeed I found him "in the ditch" as he was out collecting manure. He is a good man, but working with his own hands, though a "city farmer" he believes in Poor Rich's motto:

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The Maine Farmer: An Agricultural and Family Newspaper.

Maine Farmer.

Augusta, June 15, 1875.

TERMS OF THE MAINE FARMER.
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We desire to inform our subscribers to change its post-office or to discontinue its paper, must communicate to us the name of the office to which it has been sent, otherwise we shall be unable to comply with his request.

Collectors' Notices.

Mr. J. P. GAGE, our agent, will call upon our subscribers in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.

Mr. S. N. TAYLOR, our agent, will call upon our subscribers in York county during June.

Mrs. G. S. AYER will call upon our subscribers in Somerset county during June.

Machinery and Manual Labor.

The proceedings at the recent annual meeting of the Social Science Congress in Cincinnati, were generally interesting and profitable, but they were not entirely unimpaired with nonesense. Nor is this to be wondered at. An opportunity is there offered for theorists to present their views upon the numerous topics belonging to Social Science, and it cannot be expected that, in all cases, these views will be sound and practical. At the late session a paper was read on the Displacement of Men by Machinery, which, as reported in the papers, contains about as much nonesense as could well be crowded into the space it occupied. Such a paper would be appropriate and would excite no surprise coming from the communistic or socialistic societies of the western States, but when reported as part of the proceedings of a society composed of men who profess to discuss questions from a philosophical and scientific standpoint, its ideas seem strangely out of place.

The writer takes the general ground that all progress in labor-saving tools and machinery, has resulted in a corresponding degradation of manual labor. This same view was held by the mob in England, when in the last century, they destroyed labor-saving machines, and if this theory is correct, what has hitherto been condemned as a lawless act, can be justified on the score of political economy. But the theory is not correct. Before the invention of the spinning jenny when all the spinning was done on the old hand wheel, girls worked for fifty to seventy-five cents per week; now girls who are willing to go out to service can get from two to five dollars per week, according to the kind of work and the amount they can do. There is also a ready and constant demand for female help. A week's labor of a girl at spinning or house-work fifty years ago, would purchase only about two yards of print; now a small amount of labor will purchase from thirty to forty yards. Half a century ago, before the invention and introduction of labor-saving machines, the price paid to farm hands in Maine, was from six to ten dollars per month; now, even in these depressed times, they get about twice as much as that, and the purchasing power of a dollar for most of the necessities of life, is two or three times as great as it was then.

The remedy for the alleged difficulty proposed by the author of the paper referred to, is as absurd and impracticable as the first proposition is untrue. He does not advise the destruction of the labor, but a reduction of the number of laborers by act of Congress. As machinery does the maximum amount of work with greatly reduced manual labor, he proposes to limit the working time of the machinery to that point which will give employment to all for a certain number of hours each day. For instance, if machinery doubles the labor capacity, then the number of working hours should be reduced from ten to five. We do not propose to waste our time and space in showing up the absurdity of this proposition, for no sane person will consider it worthy of a second thought.

Speaking of farm manual labor, this writer declares that it has a great degree of displacement by labor-saving machines, and gives this as a reason why so many laborers, have, within a few years, gone from agricultural districts to the large towns and cities. This is certainly not so. Every person who has given any thought to the subject, knows that the migration from the country to the city, for the most part, took place in the years immediately succeeding the war, when farm labor commanded higher pay than at any other time in the history of the country. And since the great financial crash, caused by the reaction of the paper currency and the consequent shrinkage of values, migration to the cities has not only stopped, but has actually turned the other way, and scores and hundreds who have not already done so, are talking of going back to the farms.

The writer introduces the old thredbare argument which we remember of hearing used against the construction of railroads in this State. He estimates how many horses would be required to do the work of the railroads, and calls that number thrown out of employment or retired by the use of railroads. We do not propose to waste our time and space in showing up the absurdity of this proposition, for no sane person will consider it worthy of a second thought.

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The fact is, there is work for all and work which will yield a comfortable support. What is needed and what is now going on, is a readjustment to correspond with the changed condition of things; a redistribution of labor. The abandoned farms must be reoccupied, and new farms wrested from the grasp of the wilderness. Intelligent farming, even in these depressed times, if it does not bring opulence, will insure a good support, and that is the important question of the hour. Some departments of manufacture are overstocked with labor while others are deficient. A redistribution is needed in all such cases, and the prudent man will not hesitate to change his employment, when he can better his condition by so doing. By such a redistribution, an equilibrium will be restored, and prosperous times will follow. It is folly to look to political parties for a remedy or to hope that legislation can accomplish anything in this direction. If Congress had not been in session for a year past, the business of the country would have been much better settled than it now is. The best thing that Congress can do, is to leave all financial tinkering alone. The remedy for the hard times of which we too loudly complain, is in our own individual hands, and if we are not able to stand to apply it.

The belief gains ground that the European Congress will be able to settle the Eastern question, such a master as shall be universally satisfactory to all parties, and thus end the fate of millions of blood. So promising is the outlook, that it is said both Turkey and Russia have dismissed all American officers in their respective armies, and sent them home. The representatives of most of the interested powers have left for Berlin where the Congress is to be held, beginning on Thursday the 18th.

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The Maine Farmer: An Agricultural and Family Newspaper.

Poetry.

David Grey's Estate.

Over his forge beat David Grey,
And thoughts of me rich cross the way.
"Hammer and anvil for me," he said.
"And weary toll for man's bread."

"And his soft homes and quiet walls,
A life of ease in his spacious halls."

The clasp of hands on his dreaming broke;

"A flicker of flame, a whiff of smoke."

Ox in trunks, forge grows white-hot
Coal and fire were there.

As the light waned, the blacksmith ran,
In face and radiis like a crazy man.

"Schoolhouse affer!" Men's hearts stood still,

And the women prayed as the women will;

While loves the horses rose shrill and high.

Night in its shadow hid sun and earth;

The rich sat by at costly hearth.

Lord of wide acres and unfold gold,
But David Grey was old.

I thought of the family "cross the way";

"I would," he sighed, "be David Grey."

The blacksmith sat at his children's bed;

"I daresay all affer O God," he said,

"My Sir Thy bounches mercy hide!"

"Only in-day have I learned how great
Hath been thy bounches and my estate."

Our Story Teller.

A WORD IN SEASON.

The Day Accommodation on the Shore Line was making its deliberate way eastward, curving with every curve of the coastline, and clinging to the way-side as though it were a nestling bird.

On one side of the track lay the blue, white-capped seas; on the other, low rolling hills with foregrounds of brown meadow and golden sedges.

At a rapid gait, she ran along, do-

ing her errands, and, pausing, said,

"I daresay all affer O God," she said,

"My Sir Thy bounches mercy hide!"

"Only in-day have I learned how great

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anisms to be exchanged for cuttings from old Sally's famous chrysanthemum? but when, after knocking a long time at the seldom-used front door of the farm, she found that no one was home, they made their way to the family sitting-room, no one was visible, and the fireless hearth and neatly piled books and papers on the table made it evident that the master had passed away. They waited, they lingered and wondered, a creeping step came down the stairs, and old Sally, with a tea-cup in her hand, entered the room. She saluted the ladies with a smile.

"Thank you, Miss Lenox. I'd like the geraniums well enough if I'd time to get round with 'em, but just now my hands is full, with looking care of plants, aching all day."

"Mr. Dalrymple's wife?" she said.

"Yes; she is and she ain't. 'Tain't no particular kind of sickness as I can see; but when I took up time with her first come, thinking it might be she'd ketched it inside cold on her journey; but it didn't do good, and she is on the mend now, and ain't got a peep a' pain, till finaly she took to her bed, and to-day Mr. David's gone over for the doctor."

He set up with her last night. She didn't want to sleep in the house, so he wouldn't sleep anyhow, and he'd rather it. It don't seem as if need take up any time awaitin' on her, for she don't ask for anything from me now, and to day's time she's been up and about, and I've seen her a good deal, and I'm not even sick, and I ain't done much except go up stairs and down again these four days."

"It is you!" she cried. "Oh I am so glad!"

There were many flattery equal to that "you!"

"You haven't forgotten me, then?" said Felicia.

"I am to see her. What a sweet little face!"

"Isn't she?" with an exultant smile. "And she's much prettier with her eyes open. They're not blue, they're dark gray like her father's. I daresay she's a good girl."

"I daresay she is," said Felicia. "I think she's a good girl."

"How I wish she was here. I've told him about her. He's over in the field yonder with the hay cutters. They do twice as much work as we do."

"I know you will forgive me for coming up so unmercifully," began Felicia, speaking rapidly to hide her own nervousness.

"Your housekeeper gave me leave, and I went to see her, and I was so curious enough to make her turn her head. It was a woman's name, and an uncommon one—"

The person who uttered it was a man. He sat on the opposite side of the car, and a little in advance of that which Miss Mallows herself occupied, and she now observed that he was a middle-aged odd-looking man, his appearance. His hair was short and grey, his shoulders were massive and firmly formed; his face seen in profile was a good one, with kindly eyes and a striking forehead, but his nose was bent and his mouth was something dwarfish in his attitude, and when presently he half rose to shut the window, it became apparent that he was a dwarf. There was no nobility, but there was a dash, and a little in advance of that which Miss Mallows herself occupied, and she now observed that he was a middle-aged odd-looking man, his appearance.

He was not young, for his hair was grizzled, and in his eyes there was a wisdom, and altogether his appearance was half repulsive and half attractive, and awoke a feeling compounded of good-will and pity so strongly pronounced that it was hard to tell what predominated.

His companion, evidently the "Archduke," was addressed; his face not over twenty, of that delicate type prettiness known as "Annette." Her hair was dark, and she was wearing in her brief flower-time. Her nose was straight, her lips thin, and set, and set were swollen, with crying, the lip quivered nervously, every vestige of color had fled from the round childlike cheeks, and the hands of the new-given bride were pinched, with a tightness like terror.

Once or twice did Miss Mallows watch, she fought with emotion and called up a smile in answer to the smile which these dairies surrounded. Then she turned to the contrast, talked incessantly in a low-voiced steady strain.

Miss Mallows could catch only a word now and then, and her curiosity about the couple grew, until she asked, "What do you pay any price to know their story?

They could be no doubt as to their relation, she thought; they were husband and wife, but just enough for his to be a Mile after he'd told and talked, devouring her with his eyes the while, and she with her hair, her head never meeting his, and she was a good deal afraid, and altogether his appearance was half repulsive and half attractive, and awoke a feeling compounded of good-will and pity so strongly pronounced that it was hard to tell what predominated.

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